

IN THE CLAIMS:

The following is a complete listing of the claims, reflects all changes currently being made thereto, and replaces all earlier versions and listings:

1. (currently amended): An image processing method comprising the steps of:

inputting image data representing an image, the image data including a plurality of color components ~~items of color-component data representing an image;~~

deciding output data of a plurality of ~~items of output color-component data,~~ color components, which represent an image reproduced by an output device, by referring to a table in which a correspondence between input data and the output data is stored, based upon ~~the plurality of items of color-component data~~ the input data, wherein the input data is generated by adding data distributed based upon color difference to the image data of the plurality of color components, and the color difference is generated by calculating the difference between the input data and the output data; and

outputting the ~~plurality of items of output color-component data~~ of the plurality of color components decided ~~[[at]]~~ in said deciding step~~[[:]]~~.

wherein, in a case of an image in a specific area in which ~~an entered~~ image is represented by at least two ~~items of color-component data,~~ output data of color component of any one ~~item of color-component data~~ is decided as ~~output color-component data at~~ in said deciding step.

2. (currently amended): The method according to claim 1, wherein the two ~~items of color-component data~~ color components are cyan and magenta ~~color-component data~~, and the specific area is a high-contrast area.

3. (canceled).

4. (currently amended): The method according to claim 1, wherein the ~~plurality of items of output color-component data are~~ output data of the plurality of color components is decided based upon quality of printing required.

5. (currently amended): The method according to claim 1, wherein the ~~plurality of items of output color-component data are~~ output data of the plurality of color components is decided based upon characteristics of printing media.

6. (currently amended): The method according to claim 1, wherein the ~~plurality of items of output color-component data are~~ output data of the plurality of color components is decided based upon impact precision of an output dot pattern.

7. (currently amended): An image processing apparatus comprising:
input means for inputting data of a plurality of ~~items of~~
~~color-component data~~ color components, representing an image;
deciding means for deciding output data of a plurality of ~~items of~~
~~output color-component data~~, color components which represent an image reproduced by
an output device by referring to a table in which a correspondence between input data and
the output data is stored, based upon the plurality of items of color-component data of input
data, wherein the input data is generated by adding data distributed based upon color
difference to the data of the plurality of color components, and the color difference is
generated by calculating the difference between the input data and the output data; and

means for outputting the ~~plurality of items of output color-component data~~
of the plurality of color components decided by said deciding means[[:]],

wherein, in a case of an image in a specific area in which ~~an entered image~~
is represented by at least ~~two items of color-component data~~, output data of color
component of said deciding means decides any one item of color-component data as output
color-component data is decided by said deciding means.

8. (canceled).

9. (currently amended): A computer-readable recording medium ~~on~~
~~which the~~ encoding a program for causing a computer to perform an image processing
method comprising the steps of:

inputting image data representing an image, the image data including a
plurality of color components ~~items of color-component data representing an image;~~

deciding output data of a plurality of ~~items of output color-component data~~,
color components, which represent an image reproduced by an output device, by referring
to a table in which a correspondence between input data and the output data is stored, based
upon ~~the plurality of items of color-component data~~ the input data, wherein the input data is
generated by adding data distributed based upon color difference to the image data of the
plurality of color components, and the color difference is generated by calculating the
difference between the input data and the output data; and

outputting the ~~plurality of items of output color-component data~~ of the
plurality of color components decided ~~[[at]]~~ in said deciding step[[:]],

wherein, in a case of an image in a specific area in which an entered image is represented by at least two items of color-component data, output data of color component of any one item of color-component data is decided as output color-component data at in said deciding step.